



Living and Working as Church

A Prayer for Catholic Educators

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to our prayer to begin this session on faith formation for leaders in our Catholic school board. The theme for our prayer is *Living and Working as Church*. Let us now take a few moments to hear God's Word and ask God's blessing on our activities.

OPENING SONG

Please join in our opening song: *We are Called*

OPENING PRAYER

Let us begin our prayer marked by the sign of our faith: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

Lord, before we were born, You chose a unique role for each of us to serve the body of Christ. We ask You now to open our minds and hearts to the wonder of this call and all that it promises for us as sharers in the Church's evangelizing mission. We make this prayer in the name of Jesus, Your Son. Amen

And now, let us be attentive to God's word.

READING (Eph 4, 4-7, 11-16)

A reading from the letter to the Ephesians

There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all. But each of us was given grace according to the measure of Christ's gift. The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ. We must no longer be children, tossed to and fro and blown about by every wind of doctrine, by people's trickery, by their craftiness in deceitful scheming. But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body's growth in building itself up in love.

(pause)

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

REFLECTION

God has made a personal investment in us. We have been furnished with the gifts and power of the Holy Spirit, that we might together carry out the work of Christ. Our lives are a gift – to be poured out in love for the good of the Body, the Church. And each of us has been given a share in the Church's mission as our Lord has seen fit.

As members of the universal Church, we and billions of others like us past and present, bear the indelible mark of belonging to Christ, and in Christ, we belong to one another. We are one family, joined at the very depth of our being through our baptismal union with the Beloved, who gave Himself up for us in love. Ours is a communion suffused by the Spirit of Him who entered the human condition powerless and poor to comfort the suffering and downtrodden with the Good News of God's salvation. Here, worldly privilege, power, status and self-made careerism all dissolve. In their place, poverty and brokenness become humble occasions of redemption and self-acceptance to be shared with joy.

Educating in the name of the believing community, we are challenged to allow this joy enter our daily interactions with those we serve. We can trust that God will use the ordinariness of our lives to speak the Good News. Seen in this way, every kind gesture and thoughtful word is a sign of the Kingdom, of overflowing blessing and peace, where even our crosses become trees of abundant life. God has made an investment in us, backed by the Spirit, that we might truly live as members of the Church – a new creation, signs of the Kingdom, and light for the world.

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

Let us pray for the Church. That all the Baptized might uphold one another's dignity as sharers in Christ's gift of new life. We pray to the Lord. *Lord, hear our prayer.*

Let us pray for the world. That all peoples will embrace the call to peace inscribed by God on every human heart. We pray to the Lord. *Lord, hear our prayer.*

Let us pray for all who suffer, especially those in our families and communities. That their pain might be met with compassion, healing and justice. We pray to the Lord. *Lord, hear our prayer.*

Let us pray for our presenter in today's sessions. That the Holy Spirit will inspire his words with wisdom and open our hearts to his message. We pray to the Lord. *Lord, hear our prayer.*

Please feel free to add your own intentions... We pray to the Lord. *Lord, hear our prayer.*

Let us bring all our prayers – spoken aloud and in the silence of our hearts – to the tender mercy of God, uniting them with the words Jesus taught us: ***Our Father...***

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord, we thank you for the gift of our Baptism, through which we have been made members of Your pilgrim people. Grant that we might continue to seek renewal at the fountain of grace that you continue to pour out on us from the heart of our Church. We make this prayer to you through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

And may Almighty God bless us. Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

CLOSING SONG

Please join in our closing song, *Lord of All Hopefulness* (CBW III, No. 497)

